Region Loses a Treasure

Our region, and the Connemara family as a whole lost a dear friend in September. Anne Moe passed away after a battle with ALS. She will be fondly remembered by many in our region and beyond. A booklet of stories from her memorial service is being sent with this newsletter.

Region Meeting

Our next Region III meeting will be held at Sycamore Ridge Farm, Warrenton, Virginia, home of Les and Marilyn Cheek on Sunday, December 3rd at noon. Please bring a dish to share. Some of our talented members also bring their handmade gifts to sell in time for Christmas, and of course the boutique is a great place to do your holiday shopping.
ACPS Annual Meeting

As reported by our new governor, Suzanne Phelps

The Green Mountains of Vermont were still quite green in mid-September when ACPS members converged on the Ascutney Mountain Resort for the annual meeting. Our Region I hosts arranged great weather and a wonderful setting for us all. The detailed official meeting minutes and a complete listing of and tributes to our award winners will be forthcoming in future issues of the magazine (awards discussions available now on the American Connemara Pony Society Facebook page). A few key highlights from the annual board meeting are noted below.

One of the first reports, of importance to all members, was the report given by Kate Denton, Membership Chair. She said that the membership numbers were slowly creeping upwards again. After comparison with other breed societies, it was thought by the group that the dues for membership have not been raised in a very long time, and the consensus was for a hike in membership fees. The new annual rates, approved to go into effect March 1, 2018, are: $25 for Juniors (no increase); $40 for Associates; $50 for Seniors; and $100 for a Family membership. Life membership was raised to $750. The cost of the hard copy Membership Directory was raised from $10 to $20 to offset the cost of printing and postage. (NOTE the March 1 date for the increase – get your 2018 before then and get the current rates!)

Another topic of lively and thoughtful discussion during the business meeting was the question of how to handle requests for hardship registrations for ponies. Members were concerned with balancing many factors, including the desire to provide a path for registration of an otherwise qualified pony whose documentation was lost or not complete versus the need to preserve the rights of stallion owners and the integrity of the registration process. Given the complexities and unique situations that could present themselves, the decision was made to allow requests for hardship registrations to be considered on a case by case basis.

And of course, new ACPS officers were elected. Serving for the upcoming year will be Catherine Blackmon, President; Kate Denton, Vice-President; Scott McGuffin, Vice-President; Stephanie Fenton-Hickey, Treasurer. Chris Knox will be the chair of the 2018 Nominating Committee, with Deb Norman as the new member. Linda Haines rotates off that committee, and Sally Oxnard is the third member for 2018.

A highlight of the meeting, both socially and educationally, was Friday evening’s dinner featuring remarks from Denny Emerson. Denny offered his perspectives on the challenges of how to preserve defining breed characteristics in breeds such as Connemaras with a comparatively small breeding pool. While he readily acknowledged and supported the great results from crossing Connemaras with other breeds, he espoused the philosophy that, for preservation of the breed’s fundamental characteristics, outcrosses are best done via Connemara stallions, while purebred mares should always be used to produce more purebreds. The colloquial term he used was of “preserving the seed corn”. He noted the relative homogenization of the numerous, originally distinct German warmblood breeds by interbreeding as a cautionary tale. His vast international competitive experience coupled with his charming manner and openness made for a very entertaining evening.

Saturday night was given to a dressier banquet focused on the annual awards, and of course the Regional baskets and silent auction items. In addition to the fun of learning about and listening to the award winners, members made multiple trips to the side tables to bid on their favorite items. The clever Regional gift baskets featured everything from California beach goodies to New England specialties and everything in between. The beautiful Region III basket was filled with color-coordinated goodies
from the Region III boutique as well as donations from individual members.

Next year’s annual meeting will be hosted in September by Region 7 in St. Louis, MO. Additional details on dates and logistics to follow.

Pony Tales

From Marilyn Cheek:

— **S.R. Irish Envoy** (Joey) (Greystone Ian McVai x Glenmary Absinthe), bred and owned by the Cheeks of Sycamore Ridge Farm was reserve champion Registered VA Bred Pony Hunter at the HITS Culpeper Finals September 29. He was shown by ACPS junior, Keely Cooley, of Culpeper who usually can be found competing her big chestnut warmblood at events around our region or working with her *Ard Celtic Art daughter with an eye toward following in her illustrious sire’s hoof steps.

**S.R. Perseus' Pleasure** (*Hayselden Perseus x T.F. Apple Crisp) is spending the foreseeable future on lease to new junior member, Lily Yacoubian, of Washington, VA. Lily, 10, is learning as much as she can about Connemaras and is planning to do lots of trail riding, fox hunting, pony clubbing and (down the road) maybe some eventing as well. For now, there are lessons at Turkey Hill Farm where Pleasure lives, taken with an eye toward participating in the Region 3 show next summer.

The filming for the “Billie and Blaze” movie, part of which will be shot at the Warrenton Show ground, is rumored to be imminent. The filmmakers have probably talked to every Connemara owner in Virginia and for the first 6 years of planning were focused on using Joey(SR Irish Envoy) for “Blaze”, although that obviously would have required a lot of makeup! Over the years, as they tried to raise the funds to make the film, they have lost “Billie” after “Billie” as boys outgrew the part. They now have a new boy, and a new pony (non-Connemara) but are looking for people, ponies, horses, vintage carts, vintage cars and dogs to be “extras” (some paid, some not) when they film the climactic show scene at Warrenton. If anyone has a yen to be in the movies, they should get in touch with Betsy Burke Parker, the horse sports writer at the *Fauquier Times* newspaper (betsyburkerparker@gmail.com)

**Blue Ridge Conor Larkin – Diplomatic Mission**

By Judy Brescia

This summer my friend, Mary Gustafson, started an equine tourism venture on a small scale named Equeshare. Its mission was to provide overseas visitors with an equestrian experience. The first to participate was a Japanese family of four who came for a week in July. The Cato family consists of a mother (Tae), father (Tosh) and a daughter (Chika) and son (Tak), both in their early teens. The entire family rode and owned horses. They owned 14 rescued ex-race horses which were in the process of being retrained for new careers.

The family wished to absorb as much as possible of the Virginia equestrian life so a program was tailored where they would ride each morning in lessons and spend the afternoons visiting other equestrian facilities. The riding was based at
Mary Flood’s lovely Wildfire Farm in Lovettsville, VA and Mary Flood did the instruction. A casting call had gone out for 4 geldings who had evented up to Novice level. I thought Conor would be a good fit because he is very tractable and has been ridden by a lot of people with good results. At 15.0 hands, he was the smallest of the four making him quite desirable, especially to the kids. The lessons were mostly dressage but one day the adults had a cross country lesson and one evening the kids ventured to Red Gate Farm for a jumping lesson. There were also after lesson trail rides.

Afternoon ventures included a tour of the Marion DuPont Scott EMC, visits to two therapeutic riding programs, an evening of Polo at Morven Park and some trips to tack stores. The final day, they were taken into Washington on a general sightseeing tour.

What made this such a fascinating project is that the family had very limited English skills and so a translator was needed during their trip. Dustin, Mary’s son, has lived in Japan for over 10 years and is fluent in Japanese but we all know that equestrians have their own language. We used six 2-way radios, which enabled Mary Flood to instruct, Dustin to translate to Japanese and the four family members to hear the instruction in Japanese. It took a little time to develop to figure out how to convey certain ideas, i.e., ‘you are posting on the wrong diagonal’ cannot just be converted word by word and even, walk, trot and canter started a little problematical, let alone, leg yielding, etc. Nonetheless, everyone had a great attitude and by the end of the week, Mary Flood was giving them some instructions in Japanese and they could express complex ideas thru Dustin and body gestures.

The family was lovely and their riding skills, though good at the onset, improved thru the week. They were riding much bigger equines than they were accustomed, including a very large, big moving warmblood. I was so impressed that they came halfway around the world to take instruction in a second language and on unknown horses. It is always amazing what people can accomplish when they are willing to move beyond their comfort zones! I was very proud of Conor’s contribution – he was ridden by all four of them, on trails, over jumps and in the dressage arena and never put a foot wrong (at least not while I was watching.)

Connor and his friends

**Classified Ads**

**For Sale:** 2015 Old Soul, beautiful dun gelding. **VSH Devine Tullaigh** (New Hearts Dancing Winds x Tullymors Ned Devine) 14h to finish 14.2. Tully is loving, sane, and packed with potential. He has wonderful conformation and superb manners, with a blue ribbon at Warrenton to prove it. Flat kneed hunter mover with sweep. Tully Tacks up and stands quietly
for mounting, gone on bareback barnyard hacks, ground drives and ponies. Carefully started and
Well prepared to find his person and start life together! Come meet this unflappable, good
looking youngster in Powhatan, Va $6500
Margaret Long 804-380-1022

**For Sale: Far Mountain Taner**  Big athletic gray Connemara colt (Tullymors Ned Devine x
Windy Isles Maid Marian) DOB 05/06/17. Has interacted daily with people since born. Fearless
jumping ditches, banks, and boulders. His Dam ‘Maddie’ is (at 5 yrs) 15.1h and Taner should
mature over 15h. Super smart with a big personality. Weaning now. Ready for someone
to share adventures with. $4,500 or Private Treaty to the right home. Joyce Anderson
(307)765-9977, farmountainjoyce@gmail.com

**BALMULLO FARM OFFERS:**

Standing at stud: **Foothills Field Marshall** (*Gunsmoke X Foothills Maybee), outstanding
eventing stallion, now competing at Preliminary. Many beautiful babies on the ground. $850 stud
fee includes $200 booking fee. Cooled shipped semen only.... shipping and collection costs paid
by mare owner. Further information, balmullofarm@gmail.com
For further information call 804-507-0269.

Balmullo Farm offers for sale: outstanding half-bred yearling by Foothills Field Marshall
aka Bruiser. **Balmullo’s Moon Dancer** is out of an ID/TB, Rivendell’s Summer Moon, and was
bred to event. 15.1 hands at a year, he promises to be large and athletic. He has been well
handled, and leads, loads, and stands for bathing
and the farrier. For further information email balmullofarm@gmail.com

CADI O’DALY FARM OFFERS:

Also standing at stud: **Tre Awain Goldsmith** (Tre Awain Ginger Blue x Tre Awain Golden Lily) - 15.2, 1999 dun stallion with an impressive competition record. Winner of the 2015 ACPS An Tostal Award. Known for passing along his lovely temperament, athletic jump, and beautiful movement to his offspring. N/N for HWSD, $800 Located at Cady O’Daly Farm in Lynchburg, VA. Contact us at www.CadyODalyFarm.com; 571-271-9441

GLENDALE FARM OFFERS:

We will once again stand **Rattle 'n Snap Laddie Boy** (Moy Hazy Cove x Castle Strange Sparrow). Stud fee is $800 which includes a $250 booking fee.

Also standing at Glendale Farm is **Fernville Matchmaker** (Fredericksminde Hazy Match x Ross Castle Moya [Abbeyleix Owen]), imported from Ireland. He is a 2006 14.2 grey pony with excellent bone and movement. Stud fee is $600 which includes a $250 booking fee.

Two 3-year old fillies:
**GDF Match Point** (aka Peony)
By Fernville Matchmaker
Out of GDF Rock the Boat (by Rock Point- TB) $5500.
Bay w blaze and a couple white feet

**GDF Matchless** (aka Iris)
By Fernville Matchmaker
Out of Annie- TB. $5500
Plain dark bay
Both will be over pony size
All of these "ponies" w/t/c in the ring and have been trail ridden.
Call if you need more particulars.
**Deb Norman**, 540-955-1995 or deb@glendalefarm.com.